Reply to Milton Jacobs
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s	*n*	*i*	*j*	*h*	(*i*+*h*)	(*i*−*h*+1)
$a_1+a_2+a_3\ o\ a_4$	4	3	1	1	4	3
$a_1+a_2\ o\ a_3-a_4-a_5-a_6$	6	2	4	2	4	1
$a_1+a_2+a_3\ o\ a_4-a_5-a_6$	6	3	3	2	5	2

[Note: Each a_r is a variable with values m, f where $r=1, 2, \cdots, n$ (n is the number of nodes in the string in which a_r occurs).]

[4] Let p be the number of +'s and m be the number of −'s in a string s. Define

$$x(s)=\begin{cases}2 & \text{if } p\geq m\\ 1 & \text{if } p<m\end{cases}$$

$$y(s)=\begin{cases}n-1 & \text{if } p\leq m\\ n & \text{if } p>m\end{cases}$$

(3′) def For any string s,
(i) s is *Iroquois$_2$-cross* just if:
(a) s is collateral, and
(b) the xth and yth nodes of s are of opposite sex;
(ii) otherwise s is *Iroquois$_2$-parallel.*

Examples (arrows indicate xth and yth nodes):

s	*n*	*p*	*m*	*x*	*y*
$a_1+a_2+a_3\ o\ a_4$	4	2	0	2	4
$a_1+a_2\ o\ a_3-a_4-a_5-a_6$	6	1	3	1	5
$a_1+a_2+a_3\ o\ a_4-a_5-a_6$	6	2	2	2	5

The restriction of (3′) to Seneca (Gr $(s)\leq 1$) is straightforward:

(5′) def For any string s such that Gr $(s)\leq 1$,
(i) s is *Seneca-cross* just if:
(a) s is collateral, and
(b) the xth and yth nodes of s are of opposite sex;
(ii) otherwise s is *Seneca-parallel.*

Although (3) and (3′) are not equivalent, (5) [see below] and (5′) are—the proof of which fact is left to the reader. That is, (3) and (3′) are nonequivalent ("Iroquois") generalizations of (5) = (5′) ("Seneca").

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MATHEMATICAL REASONING AND MATHEMATICAL CONVENTIONS

Sir:

It is admirable that the AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST has demonstrated its commitment to firm up our soft science by printing Russell M. Reid's article "Marriage Systems and Algebraic Group Theory: A Critique of White's *An Anatomy of Kinship.*" Obviously, mathematics is necessary for some kinds of formal reasoning. There are, however, a few mathematical shortcomings that should be pointed out.

For example, Reid claims that a ninth axiom must be added to White's eight so as to insure the existence of an identity element. However, White's axioms (2) and (3) state that the wife-taking relation W is a one-to-one function. Since the number of clans (or "segments") is presumed to be finite, some power of W will be an identity element in the permutation group generated by W and C. Therefore, there is no justification for Reid's axiom.

In the same vein, how can a "few modifications salvage the model" when the first modification consists of replacing a group with an isomorphic copy of itself. See Birkhoff and MacLane for a lucid discussion of isomorphism in general and group theory in particular.

More obvious, though more trivial, are the typographic irregularities that spring out at the reader. I am thinking of such things as improperly positioned group operation symbols and the substitution of logical "and" and "or" symbols for the conventional intersection and union signs. Perhaps the AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST should seek mathematical counsel to avoid such embarrassments in the future.

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REPLY TO MILTON JACOBS

Sir:

I have read with increasing bafflement Milton

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Jacobs' (1967) remarks taking me to task for my review (Kasdan 1966) of Briggs's and Guède's *No More Forever: A Saharan Jewish Town*. Jacobs seems to be saying two things: first, Briggs and Guède claim to have described a completely *unique* Jewish community, and it isn't so. Second, I was remiss as a reviewer in not pointing this out.

I leave it to Briggs and Guède to answer the first charge in detail. I will limit myself to pointing out that Jacobs seems to have confused straight ethnographic description with claims of uniqueness. The authors do claim a high degree of isolation from other Jews for the Jews of the Mzab. Since isolation is a matter of degree, this is very different from claiming that all of the practices Jacobs lists are "unique." One practice, such as that of the dowery, is hard to conceive of as unique in any way. How anyone reading this reference in Briggs and Guède (1964:48) could interpret it as anything more than description is extremely puzzling.

As to the second charge of failing to point these things out, I do not see this as the job of a reviewer, nor do I see any other utility in the reduction of a description of the ongoing life of a community to a laundry list of traits. In addition, I do not think a review is the place to point out to readers of the AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST that the cultures found within a single culture area are likely to have many traits in common.

Jacobs refers to his own work 16 times in making his trait comparisons. I am sure any Middle East expert could join in the same exercise. The question, for which Jacobs gives us no answer, is why do it? If every anthropologist who reads a book and finds some traits common to his own experience practiced this kind of ethnographic overkill, we would surely have to found a new journal to handle such exercises.

LEONARD KASDAN
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A SECOND REPLY TO JACOBS

Sir:

Mrs. Guède and I were startled, to say the least, by Milton Jacobs' curious attack (1967) on Leonard Kasdan's review of our *No More For Ever: A Saharan Jewish Town* (1964). In an elaborate table (p. 221) Jacobs lists 19 specific "Ghardaia Jewish traits considered unique by Briggs and Guède (1964)." The facts are that, indeed, none of the traits listed is unique and that we never considered or stated that any of them is (or was). I hope that interested readers will verify the second of these statements by looking up the passages so carefully page-referenced by Jacobs.

In calling attention to the fact that "belief in Marabout saints" (p. 222) is common to the Arab, Berber, and Jewish communities of North Africa, Jacobs seems to imply that we were not aware of it, even though we took pains to call attention to it ourselves, (specifically p. 59, footnote 3). And in 1960, in my *Tribes of the Sahara* (p. 98), I had already pointed out that this concept "had its roots in the medieval turmoil of the Near East—in both Moslem and Christian religious communities."

I could go on in this way for many pages, commenting at great length and in tedious detail, but, in Jacobs' own words (p. 222), "What more need be said?"

LLOYD CABOT BRIGGS
Peabody Museum, Harvard University

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